

Communicable and Infectious Diseases, Seventh Edition, Franklin H. Top, Sr. and Paul F. Wehrle. C. V. Mosby Co., St. Louis, 1972. (803 pp. \$36.50)

There are now several general textbooks of infectious diseases available, each with a different emphasis and organizational structure. The seventh edition of this long-established reference text retains its previous format as well as its strengths and weaknesses. It brings together under one cover a wide range of pathogen-oriented infectious disease information with contributions from many recognized authorities.

The major usefulness of this volume to the practicing or academic dermatologist is as a first-look general reference work on specific diseases. For the most part, it is alphabetically organized according to specific pathogen and disease entities, i.e., diphtheria, leprosy, streptococcal infections, rather than by organ system or category of disease, i.e., fungal, bacterial, viral. This makes for easy reference but, as might be expected, considerable discontinuity between chapters.

Each chapter is further organized in a classic manner: definition, history, agent, epidemiology, pathology, diagnosis, treatment, and, surprisingly and usefully, nursing care and prevention and control. This latter section in each chapter, as well as an appendix which compiles in tabular form case, contact, and environmental control isolation practices for all reportable diseases, is a unique and worthwhile feature of this text. This useful information is often missing in standard references and reflects the preventive medicine orientation of the editors. In general, the information is reliable and reasonable. One could argue, however, with the rationale for some of the recommended procedures as well as their details. For example, isolation of patients with tuberculosis or typhoid is not defined in practical terms which reflect the different modes of transmission of these diseases, but, simply stated as "isolation." Furthermore, tuberculosis patients are recommended for sanatorium care—a practice no longer consistent with current medical recommendations. The inclusion of information regarding infection control, then, is commendable and helpful although specific details are somewhat outdated or too vague.

With specific reference to those additional areas which might be of most frequent use to the dermatologist, this text does not fare well.

There is no single chapter or discussion of infections of the skin. Information must be culled from individual unrelated chapters. Those sections covering infections of the skin in some of the classic

dermatologic texts are better organized and more directly useful on a day-to-day basis.

The chapters on venereal disease are excellent—comprehensive and accompanied by good illustrations.

Additionally, the chapter on antibiotics is unwieldy and almost impossible to use easily. This is most unfortunate since a great deal of information is summarized in tabular and graphic form. The data, however, are difficult to extract and the issues of antibiotic choices, indications, doses, and toxicities are not readily available.

Finally, there is no single chapter on microbiology and the interpretation of diagnostic tests. Each chapter includes information of this sort as it relates to the specific entity, but, for a reference work, as this text is intended, a general chapter dealing with selection and handling of diagnostic samples, interpretation of test results, antibiotic sensitivity testing, etc. would be of great value.

In summary, this well-known textbook's major usefulness is as a reference work when classical, comprehensive information is sought for specific infections. It is not a volume that one might expect to turn to daily. It is not organized in format that allows for easy use in differential diagnosis or therapy.

Gerald Friedland, M.D.
Boston, Massachusetts

Books Received

The following books have been received and will be reviewed in a subsequent issue:

Recent Advances in Sexually Transmitted Diseases, R. S. Morton and J. R. W. Harris (eds). Churchill Livingstone, New York, 1975.

Immunology in Medical Practice, Geoffrey Taylor, M.D. (ed). W. B. Saunders Co., Philadelphia, 1975.

Viral Diseases in Childhood, Sidney J. Sussman, M.D. W. B. Saunders Co., Philadelphia, 1975.

The Eye and Systemic Disease, Frederick A. Mausolf, M.D. C. V. Mosby Co., St. Louis, 1975.

Nursing Care of the Skin: A Developmental Approach. Vera M. Harmon, R.N., M.S., and Shirley M. Steele, R.N., M.S., Ph.D. Appleton-Century-Crofts, New York, 1975.

Vascular Disorders of the Extremities, David I. Abramson, M.D., F.A.C.P. Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., Hagerstown, Md., 1974.

Clinical Problems with Drugs, Leighton E. Cluff, M.D., George J. Caranasos, M.D., and Ronald B. Stewart, M.D. W. B. Saunders Co., Philadelphia, 1975.